

the senders through the Dead Letter Office, and 13,245 were returned by Chief Postmasters: a total of 43,283 book-packets and circulars, against 33,361 in 1886.

The under-mentioned articles of value were found enclosed in letters opened in the Dead Letter Office, and returned to the senders where practicable:—

	£	s.	d.
103 Post Office orders	310	0	8
39 postal notes	14	11	6
18 bank drafts	952	7	9
76 cheques	1,043	14	6
3 dividend warrants	8	13	6
2 promissory notes	115	19	8
Stamps	8	1	8
Bank notes	120	0	0
Gold	9	0	0
Silver and copper	3	0	10½
Representing a total of	£2,585	10	1½

In addition, 1 gold pin with pearl, 1 pair of gold and pearl earrings, 2 silver watches, 1 silver watch and steel chain, 1 silver watch and leather guard, 2 gold rings set with jewels, 1 gold wedding-ring and keeper, 1 plain gold ring, 1 Masonic gold ring, 3 Waterbury watches, 1 set of silver studs, 1 silver bracelet, 1 gold bracelet, 1 lady's silver chain, 1 greenstone pendant (gold-mounted), 1 gold brooch (20-dollar piece), 1 packet of gold dust, 1 silver brooch (Lizzie), 2 packets of New Zealand diamonds were received.

3,744 unclaimed registered letters were dealt with.

12 letters detained for postage were received, 10 of which were subsequently forwarded.

610 newspapers and 241 books and other articles without addresses were also received: of these, 40 were delivered, and 48 book-packets forwarded to London and other countries for return to the senders.

77 letters were posted without addresses.

25 letters with libellous addresses were intercepted.

171 letters were imperfectly and wrongly addressed.

3,945 letters were refused by the addressees.

9 letters were posted with previously-used stamps.

A prosecution, happily of rare occurrence, was instituted against one of the public for affixing to letters previously-used stamps; the offender was found guilty, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

BUILDINGS.

Offices have been erected at Herbertville and Rangiora.

The contract for the restoration of the General Post-office was let on the 4th February last, and the work is required to be completed by the 4th May next year.

Repairs, additions, and alterations have been made to the following offices: Onehunga, alterations and repairs; Te Aroha, additions and repairs; Manukau Head, repairs; Napier, addition of strong room; Hawera, restoring building which was damaged by fire; Woodville, additions; Wakapuaka, repairs; Blenheim, repairs; Timaru, repairs; Sydenham, repairs; Ross, repairs; Brunner, alterations and repairs; Greymouth, repairs; Lyell, repairs; Chief Post-office, Dunedin, additions and alterations; Riverton, repairs; Naseby, additions and repairs.

INLAND MAIL SERVICES.

The following are the particulars of the several inland mail services which were in operation during the year:—

Performed by coach and mail-cart	171
" on horseback	273
" on foot	54
" by water	31
" by railway	71
Total number of services	600
Aggregate mileage	9,210
Total number of miles travelled	3,796,174
Cost to the department	£27,003 7s. 11d.
Average cost per mile	1-71d.
The total cost in 1886 was	£28,656 11s. 6d.
And the cost per mile	1-86d.

There was a net increase of 23 services, and 97,203 in the number of miles travelled.

It should be stated that the mails conveyed by railway are carried free of charge to the department.

The following services were established during the year:—

Weekly between Rissington and Patoka.

Twice weekly between Manaia and Kaponga.

Twice weekly between Teremakau and Cameron's Terrace.

Twice weekly between Bombay and Paparata.